THE
Peaceable Design;
BEING A
MODEST ACCOUNT.
OF THE
Non-conformist's Meetings,

With some of their Reasons for Non-conformity: And the way of Accommodation in the matter of Religion.

Humbly proposed to publick consideration by some Ministers of *London* against the sitting of Parliament in the Year 1675. The Parl: 13. oct: 167

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Printed in the Year MDCLXXV.

767.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

TO THE

READER.

WE humbly Judge our Circumſtances have made it ſomething neceſſary to give the World a Taſt of ſome of thoſe many reaſons which have prevailed with us to be averſe to that conformity which we are called to by Law: Which had it ſprung from any Diſloyal or Rebellious Principles, could not have been conſiſtent with that inward Peace which we muſt judge our great concernment to be ſolicitous to maintain. We hope (ſave in the matters of our God) the Principles which are truly ours, will urge us to be ſubject unto Authority, and we do here profeſs that it is our full perſwaſion, that

the Powers *in being are of* God, *and that ſhould we do any thing derogatory to their due Honour, Rule, and Intereſt, it would be wickedneſs to be puniſh'd by the Judge, and introductive of our Eternal ruine and damnation. We are not unmindful of the high charges which are laid upon us to* Honour the King, *and to be* ſubject to the Higher Powers. *And God forbid that we ſhould ever deſire or deſign to enter into the Tents of thoſe who are inclin'd or love to* ſmite *authority with either* hand *or* tongue, *or to ſupplant the Throne which God hath honoured, and guarded both by* Laws, *and providence. We cannot think the Sword well placed in* Peters *hands, nor that the Tongues or Hearts of any ſhould be inflamed with rage, nor exerciſed with an arbitrary cenſoriouſneſs of Rulers actions, ſeeing we neither can, nor is it fit we ſhould ſtand upon equal ground with them. But we hope it cannot (and that it will not) be charged upon us as our crime, or as the production of inſolence, to tell the World wherein, and how we*

are

are diſtreſſed, nor to make our modeſt offers and propoſals, and humble ſupplications, as on the Knee unto our Rulers, in whoſe power God hath placed it to alleviate or remove our burthens, And it is their help and pity we earneſtly implore: Our perplexities are afflictive, and our burthens heavy on us: The reaſons of our Non-conformity we in part offer modeſtly to our Superiours, and as proſtrate Supplicants at their feet, we crave their conſideration of them: The Souls of Men are precious: Gods Honour is our undoubted Intereſt and End: Our own Liberty to Preach Chriſt (not Sedition, Treaſon or Rebellion) is dear, and would be grateful to us: And the Character of our Conſecration to God in the Goſpel of his dear Son engraven on us at our Ordination, we take to be indelible. And we doubt not but that all who are acquainted with the Laws of Chriſt, will own his charge upon us to be indiſpenſible. If we be diſſatisfied about impoſed terms of this our Miniſterial Liberty, we crave the Reſolution of this weighty Caſe from our judicous

judicious, learned and serious Fathers and Brethren in the Service of the Gospel. We hope we are not too obstinate to receive convincing evidence and information from them, only when we have but named some things as we pass, which are of more general notice, (such as two of those three Heads laid down p. 20, 21.) *we deplore a disquisition or satisfaction candidly suitable to their importance, and the Volumes of dispute that have been writ, and might be pointed to by us for enlargement. We seriously promise them a quick and full retreat from our mistakes, and hearty complyance with them, when they offer what is truly fit to satisfie our doubts about matters in dispute betwixt them and us. We have long born with patience many a smart reflection on us from both the Press and Pulpit, together with all the severities to which we have been exposed by vertue of those Laws that have been made against us: And yet resolve to use no other Weapons than Prayers and Tears, the antient Weapons of all afflicted Christians, nor shall*

our

our minds be (we truſt) at any time exaſperated into illegal courſes, for our own relief; for ſuch unwarrantable and juſtly condemned Principles we diſown. And we hope our peaceable principles, tempers, and demeanors will not turn to our diſadvantage. We have here laid our Caſe and Reaſons a little open, together with ſome propoſals for a deſired accommodation for our joynt promotion of that Work which is profeſſed to be dear unto us all, that ſo the proſperity and ſtrength of Church *and* State *may be promoted by us all, without occaſions of, or inclinations to, thoſe mutual animoſities in the Church, which will become the ſport, and ſtrength, and great advantage of forrein and domeſtick Enemies, and our great ſhame and diſadvantage here at home.*

As to the Materials of this ſhort Treatiſe, they have moſtly been derived from a late Author, whoſe Spirit in all his Writings hath breathed Peace at ſuch a rate,

on

as that we think we may entitle him to the Character which St. Paul *once fixed on* Timothy, *that he* naturally careth *for the Peace and Wellfare of the Church of Christ, and in that part especially which God hath seated in these His Majesties Dominions. We humbly deprecate all Mens displeasure, and crave the pardon of that excellent person, (whose Words and Actions seem weighed and governed still by His tender Conscience) that (two or three of us) have so boldly and freely used his Writings, without engaging his personal concernedness in the publication of these Sheets, wherein we do assure the Reader, That he had no hand as to the Printing or Publication of them, whatever other use be made of him as to his Books and Papers. Reader, consider what is here offered to thy perusal, and weigh the whole matter in an equal Ballance and pray with us that the intire interest of Holiness, Truth, and Concord may be established, and promoted-*

ted to Gods Glory, and the compleat felicity and security of His Majesty, and of the Church and State in these His Dominions.

ERRATA.

PAg. 1. l 7. dele *of* 11. l. 14. add *only*, p. 2. l. 5. add *our*, p. 3. l. 24. for *the* r. *that*, p. 4. l. 11. add *lay*, l. 12. dele *lay*, p. 6. l. 6. add *of*, p. 9. l. 4. add *Schoolmen*. p. 12. l. 19. for *contain* r. *contained*, p. 16. l. 13. for *and* r. *or*, p. 26. l. ult. add *booke*, p. 30. l. 4. for *the* r. *that*, p. 32. l. 6. add *against his person*, p. 35. l. 3. for *People* r. *Parliament*, p. 46 l. 10. for *Impurii* r. *Imperii*, p. 46. l. 14. add *strong*, p. 46. l. 20. for *Impurii* r. *Imperii*, p. 47. l. 16. for *dinguish* r. *distinguish*, p. 52. l. 18. for *sins* r. *lives*, p. 52. l 1. add *or*, p. 61. l. 21. for *enjoying* r. *enjoyning*, p. 65. l. 18. add *not*, l. 19. for *cast* r. *ease*, p. 66. l. 14. for *that* r. *as*. l. 15. for *as* r. *that*, p. 67. l. 7. add *Church*, p. 76. l. 5: add *should be all, though they cut themselves with Lances*, p. 76. l. 9. for *this* r. *things*. p. 78. l. 1. add *of Pride*, p. 80. l. 9. for *word* r. *work*.

THE

Peaceable Design:

IT is the happineſs and birth-right of the People of this Nation, that if they lie under any grievance, they may have recourſe to the Parliament. There is no burden whereof we ought to be more ſenſible than that which lies upon our Conſciences: We do humbly hope therefore that it will not be ill taken if we crave the liberty, to ſhew at leaſt what ails us; To make our apology for that wherein we ſeem to offend, and to offer ſomething for a general redreſs: eſpecially ſeeing a little collection out of ſome late papers (though ſeveral) of one perſon alone, will ſerve this triple occaſion.

There are divers ſorts of Nonconformiſts, and they have their Meetings we know, not all on the ſame reaſons.

There are ſome who have been, and are for Parochial Churches, who are ſatisfied with their conſtitution, and if they might have freedom would ſtill chooſe them: And there are others that are in their Inclinations for the Congregational way only. For our parts who have put this Paper together, we profeſs our ſelves of the former ſort, and do here declare in the behalf of our ſelves and others of our Brethren, that we do not go from the Pariſh Church in oppoſition to it, as if ſuch Congregations were no Churches, being very deeply ſenſible when our Lord hath commanded that the Tares ſhould not be plucked up for fear of endangering even but *ſome of the Wheat*, what a grievous diſpleaſure it may like to be to him, if we ſhould go to root up *all the Wheat* for fear of the Tares, which to Un-church whole Pariſhes, were to do: Nor is it

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out of affectation, pride, vanity, oſtentation, faction, or ſelf-advantage that we do it, we could not anſwer ſuch a charge againſt us, if we did ſo.

Two things therefore we will acknowledge, that our Pariſh-churhes are true Churches: And that it is our duty conſequently to deſire and endeavour their union and proſperity. And what would any Conformiſt have of us more, unleſs it be alſo to joyn with them there in the participation of the Ordinances, which ſome of us refuſe not neither, upon convenient occaſion. Well, upon what ground then ſhall we offer our apology for the cauſe we undertake? why we will give it impartially. As we grant thoſe two things to be our duty, ſo muſt we aſſume that which will not, and can not be denyed us, that it is the duty likewiſe of thoſe who are ſet apart to the office of the Miniſtry (ſuppoſing them every way to be fit & called) to preach the Goſpel by way of diſcharge of the office. We have the Apoſtles expreſs

authority and example for this, who when they were threatned, and commanded to ſpeak no more in Chriſt's name, have left us their anſwer on Record, *We ought to obey God rather than Man.* We have the precedent alſo of the firſt three hundred years after theſe Apoſtles when the Goſpel was never preached, but contrary to the will of the Magiſtrate, that is, againſt the Laws and Edicts of the Emperors: Now we muſt down this rule, that when two duties [illegible] come together, ſo that we cannot perform the one but we muſt omit the other, the greater duty muſt take place of the leſs. The rule apears in its own light, and alſo from Scripture, *I will have mercy* (ſaith God) *and not Sacrifice.* What is the meaning, but that when acts of righteouſneſs and mercy fall in, ſuch duties as that of ſacrifice, which are leſs, muſt give way. Here then is our caſe plainly, which of theſe is the greater duty? We are to ſeek Unity, and to preach the Goſpel. If we keep our Pa-

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riſh-Churches, we muſt not preach the Goſpel, if we preach the Goſpel, we muſt go to theſe private Meetings: which of theſe is indeed of greateſt moment to the glory of God, and the Peoples ſalvation? *In general*, which is the greateſt matter, that the Goſpel of Chriſt Jeſus be preached, or the Union of our Pariſh Churches be promoted? *In particular*, whether ſhall any one of us who have a call on occaſion to preach at ſuch a time, place, or company, do more ſervice to God, by going and doing it, or by refuſing and going to our Pariſh-Church for the ſake of unity, for which we have ſtill other ſeaſons? And which is the *greater evil*, to have the people of a Pariſh only divided into ſeveral places to hear the Miniſters of both perſwaſions preach to them (when this too ſhall not hinder them being parts ſtill or members of the ſame Parochial ſociety;) or that all the Preachers and Miniſters in the Nation but thoſe only who *Conform*, ſhould have their mouths ſtopt, and Talents

lents buryed? How! when there is so many of them? so many of them truly serious and painful labourers? so many of them that actually do so much good, and the everlasting welfare of thousands mens souls depend upon it? What is *Parochial Union* in comparison? we will appeal to the Consciences of every upright equal person, (whether Conformist or Non-conformist) that fears God, to give Judgement. The preaching of the Gospel, and *particular Assemblies* are of *Divine*: *Parochial Churches* are of *Humane* Institution. That which is Divine, is undeniably to be preferr'd before that which is of humane apointment. For the great charge then against us of Schisme, we answer. Schisme is a *causeless separation of the Churches union, a causeless separation from her Communion*, the Communion of a Church whereof we are Members, or should be. Let any learned Man that hath read any thing about Schism, tell us, if we do not define it right, by a separation that is causeless;

leſs; for if there be a cauſe, the ſeparation will be juſtified, as it is between us, and the Church of *Rome*. Now when the Caſe between the Conformiſts and us is ſo open, and in the face of the Sun, that unleſs we *ſet*, and *keep up* theſe honeſt *Conventicles*, the whole Generation of theſe Non-conformiſt Miniſters muſt be laid aſide from the Exerciſe of their Office, for ought we ſee as long as theſe Men do hold, whatſoever in the mean while becomes of the Souls of ſo many Multitudes: What Apology, Defence, or *Account* do we need more, but this only, *Is there not a Cauſe?* they are the words of *David* to his ſurly Elder Brethren, who were offended only for his being about the Buſineſs he was ſent. *And* David *ſaid*, *what have I done? is there not a Cauſe!*

To this Apology we know it will be ſaid by the Epiſcopal Party, (for nothing elſe that we know can be ſaid to any purpoſe) *But you may conform.* If ſo, we muſt then deſire of ſome one or

other

other of the Learned and Conſcientious among them to contribute but this one thing towards it: A little thing we may think, if they could do it. It is only to anſwer the Sheet which was tendered to the Parliament about two or three Seſſions ago, for taking away the Subſcription and *Oxford* Oath, and which ſhall be in order therefore by and by repeated. We would give all the Money in our Purſes, with a Tax, or without any, upon condition that the Parliament would either have ſuch Arguments of ours anſwered, or elſe repeal their Impoſitions.

There are Three things enjoyned in the Act of Uniformity. *Re-ordination.* The *Declaration.* The *Subſcription.* As we have borrowed thus much already from a late Paper of the Author now intimated: So ſhall we make uſe of others of the ſame perſon, in the which follows.

We begin with the Threſhold, *Re-ordination.* It muſt be acknowledg'd by

by both Parties, That *Re-ordinvtion* is an uncouth thing, quite againſt the Hair of the literate World, whether Fathers, Councels, or Modern Divines, Proteſtants and Papiſts; and put uſually into the ſame Predicament (and more eſpecially by *Auſtin*) with Re-baptization. If the preſent Biſhops therefore in the impoſing of it, would have ſtood by it, and maintained the Lawfulneſs of it, as being neither againſt the Law of Nature, nor poſitive Inſtitution; but as having rather the Examples of the Apoſtles, and of *Paul* and *Barnabas* more particularly for it, with what elſe by ſome is urged, againſt the ſtream barely of humane Authority, this would perhaps have looked handſome, and the ingenuity of it would have been notable: But when they would generally have it impoſed, and yet diſown it, and be aſhamed of it, in ſo much as though there be few or none ordained by Preſbyters, but believed the validity of that Ordination, they would have our former

mer Miniſtry to be null, and make us contented in effect to be held but uſurpers of holy things, Sacrilegious perſons, and all our Miniſterial Acts void, as the Acts of meer Laicks before, it is really ſo intollerably vile, as no mortal fleſh is able to bear. It is true, there is one Inſtance from Antiquity out of *Athanaſius*, of ſome perſons with *Iſchyras* among them whom they would not allow (as theſe hold) to be Miniſters; becauſe one *Coluthus*, that ordained them, was only a Presbyter. Unto which may be added, the Story of the purblind Biſhop, 2. *Concil. Hiſpal.* 3. *Can.* 5. *circa An.* 656. But we anſwer with Dr. *Field* on the Church in his Fifth Book, It is one thing what they *judged* according to their *Eccleſiaſtical Canons*; and another what they *ought to judg* according to the Word of God. The Scripture makes no difference between Biſhop and Presbyter, the Superiority and Inferiority ariſing after in the Church: And when we are made

Chriſts

Christs Ministers, and put in office by him according to his *Word*, how shall that Authority be vacated for something wanting only in the *Constitutions of Men*? Here is a matter of Infinite wrong, which the opinion of these Men do us. It takes away the Office Christ hath given us, and holds it null. If it was a grievous thing in the late times to put one of these Ministers out of his *place*, what is it to put so many of us out of our Office? There is no Person almost of Spirit, but will be ready to part with his life as soon as the Honour he holds from the King; and shall not the Ordained Minister maintain the Right which he holds from Christ? When so many eminent Predecessors to these Bishops, and other Defenders of this Church have maintained Presbyterian Ordination: When the Reformed Churches abroad have no other: When the Case was such as that there was no other to be had *here* in the late times: When not we alone then are concerned

only in the wrong, but our *Lord* and *Master*, whose cause it is, and whose business we are to do, and the Souls of so many people: We cannot but appeal to the *Higher Powers* in a matter of so great right and wrong as this is. For we are contented to have it revised, and judged, whether the *Diocesan* Bishop be distinguishedly named in Christs Charter for Ordination, as he is in the Canons of Men: Or when we have been ordained already, as *Timothy* by the *laying on of the hands of Presbytery*, whether the *Lawn* be *de Essentia* to the Ceremony, and the Hands avail nothing without the *Sleeves* on.

Declaration. The next thing is the Declaration. I A. B. *do here declare my unfained assent and consent to all and every thing contained and prescribed in and by the Book Entituled, The Book of Common Prayer, and the form of Ordaining Bishops, Priests and Deacons.* That is *assent* to all and every thing *contained in*, and *consent* to every thing *prescribed* by these Books. Sirs,

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There was a time, when that the Nation had the hopefulo verture of a Concord between the ſober of two parties, and the Hearts of moſt Men were in preparation to receive it. But alas! inſtead of ſuch a Gratious and Bleſſed Iſſue as was expected, loe here the ſtreight injunction of an *Aſſent* and *Conſent* to *all* Conformity, and *every thing* of it, new and old, to be approved and obeyed, or elſe one part of the Miniſtry muſt be immediately turn'd out. How can thoſe now whoſe Judgments are, and have been ſtill for moderation between both opinions in times before as now, be able to come over to one ſide altogether on ſuch terms as theſe. How can they (we ſay) make ſo ſhort a turn as this, without the hazard of ſome ſprain to their Conſcience, if they do it? We cannot tell you perhaps, nor are willing to declare the Impreſſions we have upon our Spirits againſt a going back from that more Spiritual Plain, and ſimply zealous Ser-

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vice of Almighty God, in the way we were in, and *Reformation* we ſought, unto that ſomething we are not uſed to, and fear, *to wit*, unto a *form of Worſhip and Diſcipline*, that carrying a countenance of both, but being rather only a kind of Idols thereof, doth ſeem to us, by the ſhew, pomp, and complement of the things it contains not, to undermine the Life, Power, and Efficacy of one and the other. We cannot tell you perhaps what moves us ſo much from within, whether fear of Popery returning on us, or *aliquid ἄνωθεν*: But we will produce Two or Three Inſtances apiece, againſt *Aſſent*, and againſt *Conſent* to that which is injoyned, that we may approve our ſelves to the Conſciences of *all*, as well as our *own*, in refuſing this Declaration.

1°. For our *Aſſent*. In the *Athanaſian* Creed we find this paſſage, *Which Faith, except every one does keep whole, without doubt he ſhall periſh everlaſtingly.* One of

of the Articles of this Creed is this. *The Holy Ghoſt is of the Father and the Son.* In this Article we know the Greek Church hath differed from the Latin, and held, That the *Holy Ghoſt* proceeds from the *Father* only. If we give our *Aſſent* then to *every thing* or *paſſage contained in this Book*, we muſt believe the Greek Church *undoubtedly damned*. And what if ſome of the Non-conformiſts (as well as of Conformiſts) do believe it not impoſſible, but that ſome *Heathen*, and profeſſed Socinian may be ſaved? What if they cannot think otherwiſe in regard to the Goodneſs of God, but that whoſoever he was, or is, that walk'd, or walks up to his Light in ſincerity, with a general Repentance for his unſeen Errors, muſt by vertue of the Covenant made with *Adam* ſain, and *Noah*, no leſs than the *Jews* were by the ſame confirmed with *Abraham*, be in a ſtate of acceptation with God, not conceiving but both alike (for ought they ſee) were ignorant of their

their Redemption by the Blood of Christ, or the means how their Peace was made with him? Τὸν χριστὸν πρωτότοκον τῷ θεῷ εἶναι ἐδιδάχθημεν καὶ προεμηνύσαμεν λόγον ὄντα, οὗ πᾶν γένος ἀνθρώπων μετέχει καὶ οἱ μετὰ λόγου βιώσαντες χριστιανοί εἰσι κἂν ἄθεοι ἐνομίσθησαν. *We have shewn before that Christ is the first begotten of God, the Divine Reason, Wisdom or Word, whereof the whole kind of Men, or the whole stock of Mankind do partake; and whosoever lives according to reason, are Christians, though they be accounted Heathen, and without God, such as* Socrates, Heraclitus, *and the like,* Justine *Martyr* in his second Apology for the Christians: We do not say we receive this, nor deny it: But we are ready to say what was *Luthers* saying, *We hope God will be merciful to such a one as* Cicero, *but our Duty is to abide by the Word.* And yet cannot this little Candour it self be used, if we must be forced to declare, that whosoever believes not the *Athanasian* Creed, must undoubtedly perish. Not that other

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Non-conformiſts generally make any ſcruple in this: But what do thoſe ſober and learned Doctors of the Church think of it, who have a name given them upon this account, that though they hold ſome things that agree not with her Articles or Homilies, yet they can conform to them, or have a *Latitude* to do it? *I* A. B. *do declare my unfained Aſſent and Conſent to every thing contained in the Book of Common Prayer*; and yet I *A. B.* do declare that I Aſſent not to that paſſage in the *Athanaſian* Creed. Again, I *A. B.* do profeſs that a Heathen may be ſaved; and yet I do *libenter & ex animo* ſubſcribe to the Article among the thirty nine, that does pronounce him *accurſed*, who dares hold ſuch an opinion. We are not ignorant indeed, how ſome would blend the two terms *Aſſent* and *Conſent*, and then interpret them by the words [*to the uſe*] in the Act: But this is a ſhift which will not ſatisfie all perſons, and many deſire to uſe no ſhifts. If theſe words [*to the uſe*] had been

put into the Declaration it ſelf, it had been better: Yet if they had, *Aſſent* is proper to the *Truth*, and *Conſent* to the *Uſe*. And yet moreover, how can a Man unfainedly conſent to the uſe of any ſuch Particular which is falſe, and which perhaps he even abhors, that the Wiſe and Ingenious of his particuler perſwaſion ſhould think he believed. Another Inſtance ſhall be this. In the Service on the *Gunpowder-Treaſon*, we thank God for *preſerving the King, and the Three Eſtates of the Realm Aſſembled*. It is a difficult Point now in the Politicks of *England*, Whether the *Three Eſtates* be, the King, the Houſe of Lords, and the Houſe of Commons: Or the Lords-Spiritual, Temporal, and Commons. The late King made no ſcruple in his Anſwer to the *nineteen Propoſitions* to reckon himſelf one of the Three Eſtates: Neither was there any we know that durſt account the Three Eſtates of the Land to be diſſolved, when the Biſhops were turned out

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of the Houſe by an Act. We cannot tell therefore of what Conſequeuce it is to the fundimental liberty, conſtitution, and ſtate of the Kingdom, to yield unto the inſinuation of ſuch a thing as this in our Prayers. No Man can give his unfained Aſſent to any thing he knows not, and underſtands not. This is a thing we do not know that the Biſhops are indeed *one* of the *Three Eſtates* of this Realm. Whether they be or no, we diſpute not; but till we are better ſatisfied with them and their ſtation, we are afraid that any ſnare ſhould be laid for the people in the Exerciſe of their Devotions unto God. We muſt mention one Particular more, which is our general Exception. In the new Book there is inſerted ſeveral Paſſages that make the Biſhops a diſtinct Office and Order from the Presbyter. We need not name the Words, for they are put in more than once *de induſtria*. They would not be content with a difference in *Degree* and *Eminency*; but they would

have us declare to a *jure divino* distinction, disproved by learned Doctors among the Papists, and among the Episcopal Men, as well as the Reformed Churches. Now we humbly beseech the Parliament to consider, whether the Bishops have dealt candidly with us to get such a Condition imposed on the Presbyterian to the keeping of his Ministry, as not only Bishop *Davenant* and *Usher*, but such as Dr. *Field* and *Francis Mason* must have been turned out for Non-conformists upon the same. *There are Two Orders Ecclesiastical, Presbyteri & Diaconi. When we say Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, we name but two Orders, yet three Degrees.* Mr. *Joseph Mede* disc. V.

For our *Consent*. We will name three things likewise (and but name them) more indefinitely. There is the *Hierarchy*, or Bishop invested with sole power of Ordination, and Jurisdiction. There are the *Ceremonies*, in general so often disputed. There is the *Imposition*

it self of things not neceſſary, the occaſion of ſtumbling to many good Men, and cauſe of our diviſions. If we give our unfained conſent *to all and every thing preſcribed by the Book of Common Prayer, and the form of ordering Biſhops, Prieſts and Deacons*, then muſt we give our approbation (we ſuppoſe) to theſe things amongſt others. But if the Two firſt are diſputable, we are paſt doubt in the laſt, that to impoſe things that are inductive to others to ſin, and yet not neceſſary, is unlawful. *What Charter hath Chriſt given to the Church to bind Men up to more than himſelf hath done?* Says *Stillingfleet*, with much more to the purpoſe, in his Epiſtle to his *Iranicum?* We will not ſpeak ſo laxly altogether as he does there; but when we diſtinguiſh the *Impoſition* and *Submiſſion*, this we are fully perſwaded of in Conſcience, that the *Submiſſion* to the things impoſed may perhaps be maintained; the *Impoſition* of them is not to be ſo, neither by that Dr. nor by us;

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For if we build again the things we have destroyed, we make our selves transgressors. It is not (Sirs!) the serving God by a Liturgy, or the reading Common Prayer in the ordinary daily Service that makes us Non-conformists, though it be this only lyes in the view of the inconsiderate *many*, and though there are some things we except against the occasional Offices, which by and by may be named. We are sorry if any have given cause for such a scandal which tends to the breaking of the Concord and Charity which ought to be maintained equally between the Brethren of our *private*, and of the Parochial Congregations. We should be ready to do any thing we could to the healing this scandal. But there are matters of another moment, which if we had liberty to open to the World at large as our cause requires. We doubt not but that it might come to see, whether we have reason to stick at conformity or no. There are few of us who are not sensible in some measure of the corruption

What, or who hinders, or ex-
xines that liberty?

corruption which hath crept into the Church in regard to the discipline or government of it by the *Hierarchy* and *Diocesan* Bishop so much degenerated since *Cyprians* time from the primitive simplicity: And there hath passed a solemn Oath over the Nation, engaging the main Body of it to the endeavour of a Reformation. Now when the same government is returned upon the Land with all its former corruptions, and more heavy Injunctions, if we should generally submit again to it without obtaining any amendment, composition, or abatement, we dread to think on it, with what *faces* they shall be able to stand before God, who have lift up their *hands* to him for things quite contrary in the late Revolutions. But to proceed, at last, Besides the *matter* of this Declaration, the strict prescription as to the form of words is more especially to be noted, *That this Declaration be made in these words and no other.* And what if a Minister would read the

Book

Book of Common Prayer without this Declaration? Or what if he would declare to the contents of the Book in other Expreſſions? Why ſhould theſe crooked SS's be ramm'd down the Throat to choak any? If we were put to declare in this form of words to any Book we know of this Bulk, even to the Bible it ſelf (as to any Copies we have yet ſeen of it) we muſt, for ought we ſee, ſtill ſtick out. It is ſaid in the *Kings*, That *Ahazia* was *two and twenty years old* when he began to Reign, and in the *Chronicles*, that he was *two and forty*: Both theſe cannot be true. If we were put therefore to Declare in theſe words, and no other, *I* A. B. *do declare my Aſſent to every thing contained in our Bible*, we ſhould be gravel'd: For we cannot *Aſſent* to the *Truth* of both theſe places in the *Engliſh*, nor *Conſent* to the errour of the Tranſcription or Tranſlation, when we know not otherwiſe how to reconcile the contradiction in them. In *Pſal.* 105. *v.* 28.

our Pſalter reads the words thus, *And they were not obedient to his Word*; our Bible reads them, *And they rebelled not againſt his Word.* We argue here. One Particular contained in the Book of Common Prayer is the Tranſlation of the Text. But if the Tranſlation be true in the Pſalter, it is falſe in the Bible: And if it be true in the Bible, it is falſe in the Pſalter. That they *rebelled*, and *rebelled* not, no Man can give his *Aſſent.* We know indeed how the words may be true in both Tranſlations, as to the *minds of the Tranſlators*, the one referring them to *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and the other to the *Ægyptians:* But we urge this more ſtrictly. The mind of the Text it ſelf, of the Holy Ghoſt, or *Davids* mind whoſe Pſalm it is, was but one: While the Tranſlators then are contrary in their minds, both of them cannot have *Davids* mind; and ſo one of the Tranſlations muſt have that meaning which is falſe. And why muſt we be made then to give our *Conſent*

that both these Translations should be used, when the false may be amended by the right? We mention this little thing among many others that have been objected by Non-conformists heretofore, to shew the insuperable incumbrance of these continued Injunctions. There is one such a little thing more, which perhaps hath not yet been publickly offered. It is the Rule prescribed us for the finding out the moveable Feasts and Holy-days. *Easter-day, on which the rest depend, is always the first Sunday after the first Full Moon, which happens next after the one and twentieth day of* March. Now examine this Rule for the last Year 1674. and you will find the first Full Moon after the 21*th.* of *March* was upon the 10*th.* of *April*, and consequently if this Rule hold good, the next *Sunday*, which was *April* the 12*th.* should have been *Easter-day*: But *Easter-day* was upon the 19*th.* of *April*, as the *Table for* 40 *years* in the Common-Prayer does tell you, as well as our Alma-

Almanacks did. Well! And how then ſhall we declare our Aſſent and Conſent *to all and every thing contained* in this Book? The Table is in the Book, and the Rule is in the Book. If the Rule be true, the Table is falſe: If the Table be true, the Rule is falſe. It is a grievous Caſe, that we muſt be turned out of our Living, becauſe we cannot give our Aſſent and Conſent to *Both*.

Having mentioned theſe leſſer things in the way, we ſhall perhaps be blamed, if we neglect ſome other, that are of more notice and moment with our Brethren.

In the Office of Baptiſm, the Parents are not admitted to covenant for their Children, and how ſhall the Infant anſwer *Credo*, *Abrenuntio*, out of the mouth of the Godfather? It is the Parents being in Covenant that gives Title to the Childs Baptiſm, and unleſs the Father or Mother make ſuch a profeſſion, as that we can probably judge the one or the other thereby to be in Covenant,

we cannot (some of us) admit the Children to Baptism, nor themselves to the Lords Supper.

6.5. Burial. In the Burial, how shall we be able for our lives to say of every one that dies Un-excommunicate in the Parish, that *God of his great Mercy hath taken his Soul unto himself*, with such like Expressions? Or that it is *certain by Gods Word* that every Child Baptized before Actual Sin, is in a state of Salvation? Let our Learned *Gataker* be consulted, *De Baptismatis Infantilis vi & Efficacia*, and then judge of it who will.

6.6. Holy-days. In the Service for the Holy-days, there are the most of us not agreed upon the Lawfulness of such days. *Six days shalt thou labour*: But above all the rest, there is one thing in S. *Clements* day prescribed by the New Common-Prayer Book, that we wonder how those themselves that put it in, can give their consent to it, which is, the change of a profitable Chapter in *Esay* for the Story (God defend us!) of *Bell*, and the *Dragon*?

6.7.a Apocrypha. If they would make Holy-days fasts, and Thanksgivings for Killing their Children.

There is lastly the use of the Cross, a compleat Institution of it self, brought in or added to the Ordinance of Christ, appearing to be of the same nature and end. This, we doubt, does entrench upon his Kingly Office, and must humbly therefore offer one reason for the removal, which we sollicite whatsoever be done in other matters. *The Ceremonies in use amongst us* (says Mr. *Hooker*) *are retained in no other respect saving only for that to retain them is to our seeming good and profitable.* To which purpose *We are content with these only* (says the Common Prayer Book) *as be apt to stir up the dull mind of Man to remembrance of his duty*, by some edifying signification. But the Cross being a Ceremony applied to Children who are uncapable of having *their minds stirred up* by any thing signified thereby, it is manifestly *retained without their profit.* We will enforce the Argument. By the same reason as we retain the Cross in Baptism, the other Ceremonies in Popery which

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are left may be readmitted. As we uſe the *Croſs* to ſignifie that the Child muſt *fight manfully under Chriſts Banner*, we may uſe the *Chriſm* wherein the Croſs was uſed to be made, to ſignifie the Chriſtians *anointing* to the Combate, and ſo forward. There is nothing can be replyed hereto in good earneſt, but that it is true if the Church pleaſed to enjoyn it, ſo we might. We urge conſequently, By the ſame reaſon as the Church hath relinquiſht the Chriſm in Baptiſm, it may leave the Croſs alſo, that is only if it pleaſe ſo to vote in a needful Convocation. And that it ſhould do ſo, there is cauſe enough, if there were nothing elſe, to be ſaid but this only, that as for all other Ceremonies enjoyned, the Conformiſts may plead, that they are but *Circumſtances of Worſhip*, wherein the Church hath proper Authority to appoint what is decent and orderly: But for any ſolemn intire Rite, which is no *Circumſtance* of the Ordinance unto which it is appended, or

or any ways *in genere necessary* thereunto, if this also be enjoyned, we shall have no bottom or banks set to the appointment of Ceremonies, how far this Sea shall go, and no farther than so.

We will heap no more matters of this kind, for they are infinite: And it is some relief to our thoughts, that the Parliament (we thank God) did come to be a little sensible of it, in so much as they were near content one Session to Cashier this Declaration quite. There does remain now therefore the Subscription, and this question which will arise upon it. *Whether there be not as good reason, in regard to the most sober Consciences, to take away this subscripttion in the Act of uniformity, and the Oath in the* Oxford *Act, as well as the Declaration of Assent and Consent?* and here making first our humble Protestation, that we intend nothing hereby but loyally to the Government, we must present the Sheet before mentioned to their renewed consideration. The

Subscriptio The Subscription is this. *I* A. B. *do declare, That it is not lawful upon any Pretence whatsoever, to take Arms against the King. And that I do abhor that Traiterous Position of taking Arms by his Authority, or those Commissionated by him: And that I will conform to the Liturgy of the Church of* England, *as it is now by Law established. And I do declare, That I do hold there lyes no Obligation upon me, or any other person, from the Oath commonly called the solemn League and Covenant to endeavour any change or alteration of Government either in Church or State: And that the same was in it self an unlawfull Oath, and imposed upon the Subjects of the Realm against the known Laws and Liberties of this Kingdom.*

Iuramentum The Oath this. *I* A. B. *do swear, That it is not lawful upon any Pretence whatsoever, to take Arms against the King. And that I abhor that Traiterous Position of taking Arms by his Authority against his Person, or against those that are Commissionated by him in pursuance of such Commissions.*

miſſions. And that I will not at any time endeavour any alteration of Government either in Church or State. In this Oath and Subſcription, we have the *matter*, and the *form* of words; that is, the Subſtance, and the Compoſure. The one whereof, and the other in both are lyable to the enſuing Exceptions. Which we deſire may be taken with Candor in reſpect only to our deſign, that is as *argumentative* for the removal of theſe Injunctions: Not as peremptorily *definitive* of our own judgments, and much leſs of others above our Sphear in all the Caſes contained in them.

To begin with the Oath. Here are three parts of it. The firſt part appears not (for we ſpeak it humbly only, and argumentatively) conſiſtent with *Judgment*; the ſecond with *Truth*; nor the third with *Righteouſneſs*.

We will take up the laſt part firſt. *And I will not endeavour any alteration of Goverment.* There is no Government on Earth ſo perfect that it hath need of

Laws like the *Medes* and *Persians*. Government may be considered in the *Administration* or the *Constitution*. The word *Government* here is set down indefinitely, without distinction. Alteration of Laws, and so Government in the Administration, is as necessary many times upon emergent occasions to the *Body politick*, as the fresh Air is to the *natural*. This Oath was brought into the House to have been made Common. It were not a thing righteous to have had that engagement laid on persons in such a capacity: It is not righteous to have it laid on any that are Free-holders; and free Subjects as we are. The Constitution of our Nation, as Parliamentary, is such that no Law can be *establish'd* or *repealed*, but it must pass the House of Commons, and so the whole Body doth consent in their representatives to every alteration of Government (or in the Government) that is made, if it be legal: And no house of Commons are chosen but by the people. *Every* Englishman

liſhman *is intended to be there preſent, either in perſon, or by procuration, and the conſent of the people is taken to be every mans conſent*, ſays Sir *Thomas Smith de Rep. Angl. l. 2. c. 2.* Nay, *while the King* conſilio & aſſenſu Baronum leges olim imposuit univerſo Regno, *by the counſel and aſſent of his Barons did give Laws to his whole Realm*, conſentire inferior quiſq; viſus eſt in perſona Domini ſui Capitalis prout hodie per procuratores Comitatus, *every Inferior ſeemed to conſent in the perſon of his chief Lord, as now they do by their Burgeſſes and Knights of the Shires*, ſays Sir *Henry Spelman*. This is ſo true, that in this ſenſe *Lex* is, that the Laws that paſs are ſaid to be *Quas vulgus elegerit, Which the people ſhall chooſe*. Now then if every free Subject hath a fundamental liberty to chooſe Knights and Burgeſſes, and accordingly to inform them of their Grievances, and petition them for Redreſs, and in them, as their Repreſentatives, do conſent to the alteration of Government and Laws (if there be any)

any) as profitable to the Nation. How can such an Oath be imposed on him, *That he will not endeavour any alteration*, as this is? Is not choosing Burgesses, informing them, petitioning them, acting and legally consenting in them to that end *an endeavour?* and that as much as can be in their Place and Calling? And no more than an Endeavour *in their Place and Calling* was challenged by any. It is true, the *new* Laws may be *made*, and *old repealed*, without alteration of the *Constitution:* But not without *alteration of Government*; because Government takes in both the *Administration* and the *Constitution*. Let us suppose therefore the word *Government* confined only to the Constitution. There is the Constitution of the Government in the *State*, which is a *Legal Monarchy*, and this indeed we are so far bound from endeavouring to alter, as that we think it is not alterable by the *King* himself and *Parliament*; because that Supream Power for the Administration

must be supposed in all Communities, to be derived from, and held by the *Constitution*. But as for Government in the *Church*, we are to know and acknowledge, that the Constitution hereof it self is but a Law of the Administration, in reference to the *State*. And consequently when all Laws for the Administration are liable to the Regulation of Parliaments, the great question will remain, how those Men who are Presbyterian or Independent in their Judgment, and think Episcopacy against the Scripture can be abridged the *Endeavour* only afore-mentioned, (which consists but in choosing Representatives, and doing no more than the Consitution allows) in order to the prosecution of what they think themselves obliged to in Conscience, both by *Oath*, and *the Word of God*? Is not the foundation Liberty of the whole People, and our selves with them here in danger? Judg ye that are wise. And what an anointed Plot have we had here on the Nation,

(a) why ye Constitution of Church gouvernment by Bishops (wz is apostolicall) should be alterable, and not ye Civil, they

that *Allegiance* in effect should be sworn to the *Bishops*, as well as to the *King*?

2. For the *Words* then (or *Form*) we wonder at this Rigour in the Compiler, that a Man must swear not to endeavour *any* Alteration. Had it not been enough to be engaged, not to endeavour the Alteration of the *Substance* of our Government, *Episcopacy* in the Church, and *Monarchy* in the State, but must it be *not any Alteration*? It were well we were so absolutely perfect. And again, must they not at *any time* endeavour any alteration? What if times should turn, and we be in as great a confusion as we were, or any the like chance or change come? Must these Men be bound up that they cannot endeavour to reduce back this Government that we have? No, not the King and Bishops, if the Iniquity of the times should put them out; for they have sworn, they will not *at any time endeavour any alteration in Church or State*. Sirs! The *matter* of this obligation being against the fundamental Free-

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dom of the Subject and Parliament, and the words you see so ensnaring, and that against the duty all owe to the publick good: We offer it you to consider in the first place, whether this *last part* be according to *Righteousness*.

For the *middle part* of the Oath. Here is a *position* of taking Arms *by the Kings authority against any Commissionated by him*, which must be sworn to, as *abhorr'd and traiterous*. There is now a Case in the mouths of all the understanding Refusers of the Oath and Subscription. Suppose some *Writ* sued out, and comes to the *Sheriffs* hands, and suppose some to oppose the Execution by the Kings Personal Command or Commission, and he thereupon raises the *posse Comitatus* upon them. We will ask here, whether the *Sheriff* acts not herein by the Kings Authority? We think it cannot be denyed. *By the Kings Authority is all one as by the Law, or in the Name of the King according to Law.* And when he can act so against any for all their Com-

miſſion, and the Law will bear him out, how is this *poſition* in this Caſe *traiterus*, and to be *abhord?* for our parts we do reſolutely believe that it was not ever the intent of the Parliament in this Oath, or the Subſcription, (as to the Major part we may be bold) to advance the perſonal *Will* or *Commiſſion* of the King above *Law*, which were to make his power *deſpotical*, and not *Royal*. *Non eſt Rex* (ſays *Bracton*) *ubi dominatur voluntas, non Lex, He is no King that governs by his will, and not by the Law.* And how this *poſition* indefinitely (without exception of this Caſe at leaſt) muſt be ſworn to as altogether traiterous, we are to learn. What if any ſhould come with a Commiſſion under the Seal to raiſe Money without an Act of Parliament, and by vertue of ſuch Commiſſion ſhall ſeize our Goods, rifle our Houſes, and raviſh our Wives? May not the People, or our inferiour Magiſtrates, or the Sheriff for the County, withſtand ſuch violence? May not the Conſtable

By Spelland q. Prmissis sit appearts, q. alone when for Kings acts against law (and

alone by a Warrant from the Justice to keep the Peace, raise the Neighbourhood, and do it? If he may, or the Sheriff may, it must be in the Name of the King, or by Authority of the Law; and then is there some Case or Cases where Arms or Force may be raised by the Authority of the King against such as are Commissionated by him, though never against his own Sacred Person. Suppose again that Papists or Fanaticks should either by Power or Surprize, at any time get the King into their hands, (as the Duke of *Guise* once dealt with the *French* King) and prevail with him for fear of his life to grant Commissions under His Hand and Seal destructive to the Church and State, must the Nation be remediless in this Case, and so the King and Kingdom ruin'd by these Commissions? Nay, what security hath the Nation, that a Lord Keeper may not prove Traytor to his King, and Countrey? If we may suppose such a thing possible, what if such a Lord Keeper should under the Broad

Broad Seal grant Commissions to disband His Majesties Life Guard, deliver up the Navy or Sea-port Towns, seize the Tower or places of strength; in what a Condition were the King and Kingdom brought, if the Subjects hands be bound up by an Oath not to resist or take Arms, against the execution of such Commissions: Suppose but so long as till they understand his design, for by that time, the whole Nation may be past recovery. We are offended at the sense, and stand amazed at the horrour of those sad Consequences into which the Imposition of such like *Tests*, or Injunctions as these, (if not timely retrenched) may lead our Posterity. *The Courts of Law can avoid the Kings Charters or Commissions which are passed against Law, for the King is subject to the Law, and Sworn to maintain it*, says Judg *Jenkins* in his Works, p. 48. As for the *form* then of the *words*, *I abhor this Traiterous Position*, they are harsh, the word *abhor* especially is a word of interest and passion, a cooler

word, as I *disown* or disallow, might have served. Some of the more Grave (as *Calamy* particularly) were much offended at that word. A Man may say a thing is unlawful in his Conscience, when he cannot say according to truth, *I abhor it*. There is never a Gentleman in the Land but may swear truly, that he believes it unlawful to company with any other Woman as his own Wife; but if each one was put to swear he *abhors it*, we suppose some very good Sons of the Church, as well as our Brethren, would be found willing to be Non-conformists to such an Oath. Well Sirs! when these words *Abhor* and *Traiterous* are so harsh in the *Composure*, and when such Cases as above mentioned may be put as to the position in the *matter* of it, wherein it seems justifiable, and without offence: We offer it in the next place to consideration, whether this *middle part* of the Oath and Subscription be according to *Truth*,

For the *first part*, We have a large Assertion roundly sworn. The Oath and Subscription runs not only, that it is not lawful to take Arms against the King, or that it is not lawful on any pretence, but *on any pretence* (or cause) *whatsoever*. The Grammatical literal construction of that word seems to intimate no less than that this Proposition must be held without restraint or limitation. Amongst the most eminent of Authors which have wrote of the Power of Princes, and established it against Resistance in their writings on this Subject, we suppose there are few or none to be valued above these Three, *Barcley*, *Grotius*, *Arminius*. And we shall find, that they have all their restrictions or cases of Exceptions in the maintenance of this Tenet. And how shall any be over earnest here in punishing the Refuser, when if the matter be well scan'd, the reason perhaps, why he refuses, will be found only because he hath read more then some others that yield their submission.

miſſion We begin with *Barcley*, that is *William Barcley*, a *Scot* and Councellor to the *French* King, who writes againſt *Buchanan*, *Boucher*, and other Monarchomachiſts, as he calls them. This learned Man endeavours to make his Prince to be above the whole People, that conſequently no Arms can be taken againſt him: Nevertheleſs, when he comes to put ſome preſſing Caſes, he thus limits himſelf. *Quid ergo? nulli ne Caſus incidere poſſunt, quibus populo in Regem arma capere jure ſuo liceat? nulli certe quamdiu Rex manet.* *What then? Can there no Caſes happen, wherein it is lawful for the people to take Arms againſt the King by Right? None certainly ſo long as he remains a King.* There are Caſes indeed he accounts in which a King doth *Exuere perſonam Regis*, or *Dominatu ſe exuere*, *Put off the Perſon of a King.* And particularly (*l.* 3. *c.* 16.) he mentions Two. *Si regnum alienet, ſi Rempublicam evertere conatur.* *If he go to alienate his Kingdom, if he go to overthrew the*

the Common-wealth. We cannot tell how to approve this Doctrine; the Papists uſe the ſame we know in another Caſe, we may not fight againſt our King; but if the Pope Excommunicate him, he ſhall be no King with them. Let us come to *Grotius*, and firſt quote him in his Judgment of *Barcley*, leſt you may think elſe we miſtake him. *Barclaius* (ſays he) *Regii imparii licet aſſertor fortiſſimus huc tamen deſcendit, ut populo & inſigni ejus parti jus concedit ſe tuendi adverſus immanem ſævitiam.* Barcley, *though the moſt aſſertor of Kingly Government, does come to this, that he grants a Right to the People, or the moſt eminent part of them, of defending themſelves againſt intollerable oppreſſion.* For himſelf then after he hath aſſerted this Tenet, *Summum imperium tenentibus jure reſiſti non poſſe*; *That the higher Powers may not lawfully be reſiſted*, from Scripture, Antiquity, Authority, and Example, to as much purpoſe perhaps as any, he deſcends to put ſeven Caſes, wherein he does

does *Lectorem monere, ne putet in hanc legem delinquere eos qui revera non delinquunt*; *Warn his Reader, leſt he miſtake ſome for delinquents that are not.* For *Armiſæus*, he hath wrote Three learned Books of Politicks. *De Jure Majeſtatis. De Doctrina Politica. De Authoritate principum in populum ſemper Inviolabile, ſeu, quod nulla ex cauſa ſubditis fas ſit contra legitimum principem arma ſumere.* *That the Authority of Princes over the People, ought to be inviolable, or that it is lawful for no cauſe to take up Arms againſt our lawful Prince.* Here then we have our Tenet, in the ſtate whereof he comes in the iſſue to dinguiſh between *Rex* and *Tyrannus*, a *King* and a *Tyrant*, *Tyrannus in Titulo, & Tyrannus in Exercitio*; *A Tyrant in Title, and in Practiſe*: And *Tyrannus in Exercitio, A Tyrant in Practiſe*, he accounts does *Excidere de Jure, etſi Hæreditario, Fall from his Right, though Hereditary.* *Traditur Reſpublica Principi in eum finem* (ſays he) *ut illi præſit in ſalutem omnium, a quo ſi prorſus deſciverit,*

desciverit, etiam de potestate cadit, quum non alio fine sibi commissum habebat. The Common-wealth is delivered to the Prince, that he should rule over it for the common safety; from which if he depart altogether, he falls even from the Power it self, which was committed to him only for this end. We do not give our consent to, nor pass our censure upon the words we cite, but by such Testimonies as these without naming others, we would convince those persons who were the Compilers of these Declarations to be subscribed, or sworn, with some resentment and shame, that when the temperate sense and meaning of them is such as we were not like to boggle at, they should be yet composed so *in terminis*, as to be obnoxious to so grand Exception. For the *form* then yet of the *Words*. *I A. B. do swear that it is not lawful*, &c. Here is an Oath to the *matter of a Proposition questioned*, to the determination of a Point of Conscience, and that diversly decided. An Oath should be to a *matter*

of fact, and cannot be taken but to that whereof we are certain. To require of Men therefore to ſwear to the verity of a Doctrinal Propoſition, is not according to *Judgment*, being a thing impoſſible, becauſe no Man is *infallible*. Now then Sirs! When here is ſuch an *Erratum* in the Compoſure, as the want of the words *I believe*, or the like, *I ſwear that I held or believe, that it is not lawful*, &c. and ſo material an Exception, as the Judgment of the moſt learned in general comes to, againſt the Subſtance *in Terminis*, of the *firſt* part of this Oath, which yet goes down ordinarily without chewing; we humbly offer it in the third place to be conſidered how this Oath can be taken either in *Truth* or *Judgment*. An Oath muſt be taken in Judgment, in Truth, and in Righteouſneſs. The *firſt part* (we argue) is not according to *Judgment*; The *ſecond* not according to *Truth*; The *third* not according to *Righteouſneſs*. We ſpeak it humbly by way only of Argumentation

(a) They humbly say, That by Oath appr[illegible] and injoyned by [illegible]

(as we have said) craving pardon if it offend, for the manner of the Expression. We proceed to the *Subscription* conjoyned, which hath we count Two Parts. The *one* is the purport wholly of the Oath; whereof therefore we shall adde no more but this, That when the *matter* of the one, and the other in the former part, is such as enters the foundation of Politicks in general, and the Laws and State of the Land in particular (which is Βασιλεία νομική, *a Kingdom regulated by Laws*, as Sir *Thomas Smith* hath it; *Rex sub Deo & Lege*, *The King is under God and the Law*, says *Hooker* and *Bracton*:) So that it requires the skill of the greatest *Judges*, *Serjeants* and *Sages* of the Law to determine the Cases included in it, every poor silly Minister is put to decide the same for himself, and to have that evidence therein, as to be able to take his Oath, or give his Hand to the certainty of it. The *other* part of the Subscription concerns the *Covenant*, where the words

[nor

[*nor any other*] are such a *Ford* (that as to the Consciences of all not throughly Episcopal) so far as we see is unpassable. It is nothing to some of our selves to subscribe, *there lyes no obligation on me from the Covenant to endeavour any alteration of Government*, because we never took it, and was against our Consciences, and we can conceive for others in a *private capacity*, what have they to do with Government? No Oath can bind to sedition and disobedience. But as for such as are in a *publick capacity*, and can act lawfully towards *Reformation* in their *place*, what shall we say to those? One way there is indeed, will strike off all quite, and that is to hold the present Government established to be *Jure Divino* altogether, so that any alteration is sin. He that holds thus, may affirm clearly, that though a Man swore he would endeavour to alter the Government, it binds him nothing, let him be in what capacity he will, the least

alteration is unlawful, and he muſt therefore repent of his Oath, and not perform it. But if a Man hold, that the Presbyterian Government is rather *Jure Divino*, or that neither Epiſcopal nor Presbyterian is *Jure Divino*, or that Epiſcopal Government is well, yet that *ours*, as it is now, is not altogether ſo well, but that ſomething may be alter'd for the better: We would fain be informed how ſuch a Man can abſolve him who is in a *publick capacity* (as a Parliament Man) from his endeavouring ſo much according to time and prudence, if he hath ſworn before that he will. It is in vain to hide where the water ſticks. There are ſome cannot tell how to abſolve *one other* for their ſins. They ſay not there lyes an obligation upon any other to do as they have ſworn, for fear it be dangerous; and they dare not ſay there lyes none, for fear of their Conſciences. As to our ſelves this we may ſay, that we deſire to be inſtructed, and this we will ſay, that it is an hard thing

thing to put on it to say, that there lyes no obligation upon any other but our selves whether there does or no. We will therefore close up our reasons for Non-conformity, with this one Note only. If there be so many difficulties in *one* of the things only, which is required to Conformity, what a *River* hath he to *wade*, that must pass through *All* together that belongs to it? We descend to some Proposals for concord or mutual quiet to the Nation, under these Differences: And here also we are accommodated with our *Plough* and *Heifer* from the same Author. *Secundæ cogitationes prudentius & moderatius consulunt, & prudentius quia moderatius.*

ob. 3

It hath pleased His Majesty by several Gratious Overtures to commend an union of his Protestant Subjects to the consideration of Parliament. A Design full of all Princely Wisdom, Honesty, and Goodness. In this Atchievement there is a double Interest (we apprehend) to be distinguish'd and weighed, that

that of *Religion* it ſelf, and that of the *Nation*. The *advance* of *Religion* does conſiſt much in the unity of its Profeſſors both in Opinion and Practiſe to be of one Mind, and one Heart, and one Way (in Diſcipline and Worſhip) ſo far as may be according to the Scriptures. The *advance* of the *Nation*, doth lye in the Freedom and Flourihing of Trade; and uniting the whole Body in the Common Benefit and dependance on the Government. The one of theſe beſpeaks an *eſtabliſh'd order and accommodation*; the other beſpeaks *Indulgence, Liberty of Conſcience, or Tolleration*; for while people are in danger about Religion, we dare not launch out into Trade, (ſay they) but keep our Monnys, ſeeing we know not into what ſtreights we ſhall be driven, and when in reference to their party, they are held under ſeverity, it is eaſie to thoſe who are deſigning Heads, to mould them into Wrath and Faction; which without occaſion will melt and diſſolve it ſelf into bare

diſſent

diſſent of Opinion, peaceably rejoycing under the enjoyment of Protection.

The King we know is concerned as Supream *Governour*, and as a *Chriſtian Proteſtant Governour*. As he is *King* he is to ſeek the wellfare of the Nation; as he is a *Chriſtian*, the flouriſhing of Religion, and the Proteſtant Religion particularly is his Intereſt, as the Kingdom doth lye in Balance (he being the chief Party) with its Neighbour Nations.

The Judgment now of ſome is for a *comprehending Act*. Which may take in thoſe who are for our Parochial Churches, that ſeverity then might be uſed for reclaimiag all whoſoever ſeparate from them: The Judgment of ſome others is for a free and equal *Act of Grace* to all Indifferently, (the Papiſts without moſt excepted) whether ſeparaliſts or others) abhorring *Comprehenſion*, as more dangerous to them on that account, mentioned, than all the Acts that have paſſed. Neither of theſe Judge up to the

the full Intereſt of the King and Kingdom as is propoſed. It becomes not the *Presbyterian*, if his Principles will admit him to own our Parochial Churches, and enjoy a Living to be willing to have his Brethren the *Independants* given up to perſecution: And it becomes not the *Separatiſt*, if he may but enjoy his Conſcience, to repine or envy at the *Presbyterian* for reaping any further Emolument, ſeeing both of them (ſuppoſing the latter may do ſo) have as much at bottom as can be, in their capacities, deſired of either. It is an Act therefore of a mixt Complexion, providing both *Comprehenſion*, and *Indulgence* for the different Parties, muſt ſerve our purpoſe.

mixt both

And to this end (as we may humbly hope) was there a Bill in the Houſe, *A Bill for the eaſe of the Proteſtant Diſſenters in the Buſineſs of Religion.* Which that it may (ſome time or other) be caſt into this model, we muſt preſent the ſame yet, under a little further Explication.

There

There are Two ſorts (we all know) of theſe Proteſtant Diſſentors: *One* that own the eſtabliſh'd Miniſtry, and our Pariſh Congregations, and are in capacity of union upon that account, deſiring it heartily upon condeſcention to them in ſome ſmaller *matters*: The *other* that own not our Churches, and ſo are uncapable of a Conjunction, who do not, and cannot deſire it, or ſeek it. For the *one*. That which we propoſe is a further latitude in the preſent conſtituted order, that ſuch may be received; and this we call *Comprehenſion* or *Accommodation*. Let us ſuppoſe that nothing elſe were required of a Man to be a Miniſter of a Pariſh, than there is to the Pariſhioner, to be a Member of the Pariſh Church, as part of the National. If a perſon Baptized will come to Church, and hear Common Prayer, and receive the Sacrament, and does nothing worthy of Excommunication, he is, he may, he muſt be received for a Parochial Member: In like manner if a Miniſter

first ordained (and so *Episcopally* or *Classically* approved in his abilities for that function) will but read the Book of Liturgy, and administer the Sacraments according to it, and does nothing which deserves suspension (we appeal to all indifferently sober) why should not this suffice a Man for the enjoying his Living, and exercising the Office unto which he is called) and what if some little omission here and there to salve a scrupulous Conscience (so long as the main Body of the Service be still read) were tollerated, would it do hurt to any?

For the *other*, there is indeed nothing that can be done to bring those in, and joyn them with us in Parochial union. Yet is there this to be proposed, that you bear with them, and let not any be persecuted meerly for their Consciences, and that we call *Indulgence* or *Tolleration*. If the *Presbyterian* now may be *comprehended*, he will be satisfyed to act in his Ministry without endeavouring any *Alte-*

ration, otherwise of *Episcopacy*: If the *Congregationalist* be indulged, he will be satisfied, though he be not *comprehended*, for that he cannot submit unto; and so shall there no dis-obligation put on any, but all be pleased, and enjoy the *ease* of such a *Bill*. Let but the Grounds of *Comprehension* be laid wide enough to take in all who can own and come unto the publick Liturgy, (the Conformist then we may suppose well the greater weight of the Nation) and when the Countenance of Authority, and all State Emoluments are cast into one Scale, and others let alone to come on't, without persecution to *inflame* them, or perferment to *encourage* them, (especially if one Expedient be used which shall not pass unmentioned in the close, that such as come in may find it really better to them to be a Priest to a Tribe, than a Levite to a Family) we need not doubt but Time, the Mistress of the wise and unwise, will discover the peaceable issue of such Counsels.

And here let us pause a little; for we imagine we see what *Icesicles* are hanging on the *Eves* of the Parliament House at this motion. What Prejudices and Impressions we mean have been laid on the Members by former Acts. There was a Speech delivered by the then Chancellor in *Christs-Church-Hall* in *Oxford*, to the Parliament there, and the Scholars assembled, wherein the Glory of contriving the *Oxford Oath*, and consequently of like former Impositions, was most Magnificently, as well as Spitefully enough arrogated to its proper Author. It was, it seems, the designed Policy of that Great Man, to root those Principles out of Mens minds, upon which the late Wars (as he supposed) were built; and he would do it by this Invention, *to wit*, the imposing upon them new *Declarations*, *Oaths*, *Subscriptions* of a Strain framed contrary to those Principles. We do remember now the Sentence of *Esdras* to the *Apologue* of the Angel, where the *Woods* and *Seas* would encounter

61

one

one another. *Verily* (ſays he) *it was a fooliſh purpoſe:* For the Trees could not come down from the Hills, nor the Waves get up from the Shoares. We muſt ſay the ſame of this Policy. It was really a great vanity to think that Folks ſhould be made to ſwear away their thoughts and beliefs: Whatſoever it is we think or believe, we do think it, we do believe it, we muſt believe it, notwithſtanding any of theſe outward Impoſitions. The Honeſt Man indeed will refuſe an Injunction againſt his Conſcience, the Knave will ſwallow it, but each retain their *Principles*, which the laſt will be likelyeſt to put into any villanous *practiſe*. On the contrary there is nothing could be adviſed more certain, to keep the Covenant, and ſuch Principles alive in Mens Hearts and Memories, than this perpetual enjoying the *Renuntiation* of it. Nor may you wonder, if that Leſſon ſink deep into Mans fleſh, which you will teach them with *Briars* and *Thorns*, as *Gideon taught the Men of Succoth*

Succeth. Besides, it is the most unpolitick thing that ever could have been, for such Contents as are of that dangerous Consequence to Majesty, and the Government, to have them once disputed or brought into question, to be put into these *Declarations*, *Oaths*, and *Subscriptions*, which necessitates the Examination of them to so many. It was the wisdom of the antient Church instead of contention about the Jewish Ceremonies to take care they might have an Honourable Buriall: And we dare say, if that Great Lord Chancellour had but put off his Cap to the Covenant, and bidden it a fair adieu only, he should have done more towards its Extirpation, than by all this iterated trouble to Mens Consciences. And if it shall therefore please the succeeding Ministers of State instead of going to root out the Principles of Innovation which are got into people, by this means (which is no means to do it, but the means to rivet them more into us) to endeavour rather to root out the

Causes

Causes from us, which make Men willing to entertain such Principles, and desire change: We suppose their Policy will prove the sounder. The way to establish the Throne of the King is this, to make it appear, that all those *Grievances*, and all those *good things* which the people in the late times expected to be *removed*, or to be *obtained* by a *Commonwealth*, or a change of the Government, may be more effectually accomplish d by a King in the Acts of His Parliament.

We are sensible how our Theam rises upon us, and that we begin to shoot wide. We take our Aim therefore again, and Two things in earnest we would expect from such a *Bill*, as the sum of what is necessary to the end of it, our *ease*, if it be made to serve the turn. The one is, that Bishop *Laud* be confined to his Cathedral; and the other, that Chancellor *Hyde* be totally expelled our Acts of Parliament. By the first we mean, that the Ceremonies in the ordinary Parish Churches be left to the

They in earnest require;

1° That all Ceremonies in parochiall

the liberty of the Minister, to use or use them not according to his Conscience and Prudence towards his own Congregation: And by the *latter*, that all these new devised *Oaths*, *Subscriptions* and *Declarations*, together with the *Canonical Oath*, and *the Subscription in the Canons* be suspended for the time to come. If that be too much we shall content our selves with a more sober motion, that whatsoever these Declarations be that are required to be *made*, *subscribed*, or *sworn*, they may be imposed only as to the *matter* and *end*, leaving the taker but free to the use of their own *Expressions*. And this Expedient we gather from the Lord *Coke*, who hath providently as it were against such a season laid in this Observation. *The form of the Subscription set down in the Canons, ratified by King* James, *was not expressed in the Act of the thirteenth of* Elizabeth. *Inst. part.* 4. *c.* 74. And consequently, if the Clergy enjoyed this freedom until then, in reference to the Particular therein contained,

tained, what hinders why they might not have the ſame reſtored in reference alſo to others?

It is true, that it may ſeem hard to many in the Parliament; to undo any thing themſelves have done: But though this be no *rule* for *Chriſtians*, who are ſometimes to *repent* as well as to *believe*. If they be loath to *Repeal* any thing, what if they ſhall only *interpret* or *explain*. Let us ſuppoſe then ſome Clauſe in this *Bill*, or ſome new Act, for Explanations. If any Non-conformiſt cannot come up to the full meaning and intent of theſe Injunctions rightly explained, let him remain in *ſtatu quo*, under the ſtate only of *Indulgence*, without benefit of *Comprehenſion*; for ſo long as thoſe who are *comprehended*, may yet enjoy that *Caſe* as to be *indulged* in ſome equal meaſure anſwerable to His Majeſties late Declaration, whether *Comprehenſion* be large or narrow, ſuch terms as we obtain are pure advantage, and ſuch as we obtain not, are no loſs. But if any does, and

can honeſtly agree to the whole ſenſe the Parliament intends in ſuch Impoſitionr, why ſhould there be any obſtruction for ſuch a Man, though he deliver himſelf in his own words, to be received into the eſtabliſh'd order with others, unleſs Men will look on theſe Injunctions only to be continued for *Engines of Battery* to deſtroy the Nonconformiſts, and not as *Inſtruments* of unity to edifie the Church of God.

We will not leave our *Congregational* Brethren neither, ſo long that we have ſomething more as may be ſaid for them, not ordinarily conſidered by any. It is this, That though indeed, they are not, and cannot ſeek to be of our Churches as they are *Parochial* under the *Dioceſs* or *Super-intendency* of the Biſhops: Yet do they not refuſe, but ſeek to be comprehended within the Church, as *national* under His Majeſty. We will explain our ſelves The Church may be conſidered as *univerſal*,

verſal, and ſo Chriſt alone is the Head of it, and we receive our Laws from him: Or as *particular*, and ſo the Paſtors are Heads, Guides, or Biſhops over their reſpective Flocks, who are commanded therefore *to obey them in the Lord:* Or as *national*, which is an accidental and external reſpect to the Church of God, wherein the King is to be acknowledged the Supream Head of it, and as we judge no otherwiſe; For thus alſo runs the Statute, *That our Sovereign Lord ſhall be taken and reputed the only Supream Head in Earth of the Church of* England, *called* Eccleſia Anglicana. Now if it ſhould pleaſe the King and Parliament to allow and approve thoſe *ſeparate Meetings*, and *ſtated places for Worſhip* by a Law, as His Majeſty did by His Declaration, we muſt Profeſs that, as ſuch Aſſemblies by this means muſt be conſtituted immediately *in tegral parts* of the Church as national, no leſs than our Pariſh Congregations: So would the Congregate

Churches (at leaſt thoſe that underſtand themſelves) own the King for Head over them, in the ſame ſence as we own him Head over ours, that is as much as to ſay, for the Supreme *Coercive* Governour of all, (in this accidental regard) both to keep every ſeveral Congregation to that Goſpel-order themſelves profeſs; and to ſuperviſe their Conſtitutions in things indifferent, that nothing be done but in ſubordination to the Peace of the Kingdom.

Well, let us ſuppoſe then a liberty for theſe ſeparate Aſſemblies under the viſitation of His Majeſty and His Juſtices, and not the Biſhops: We would fain know what were the evil you can find in them. If it lie in any thing, it muſt be in that you call Schiſme. Separation then let us know in it ſelf ſimply conſidered is nothing, neither good nor evil. There may be reaſon to *divide* or *ſeparate* ſome Chriſtians from others out of prudence, as the *Catechumeni*

ment of old from the *fully inſtructed*, for their greater edification; and as a Chappel or two is added to a Pariſh Church, when the people elſe were too big a Congregation. It is not all *diviſion* then or *ſeparation* is Schiſme, but *ſinful diviſion*. Now the Supream Authority as national Head having appointed the Parochial Meetings, and required all the Subjects of the Land to frequent them, and them alone, for the acknowledging, glorifying, or national ſerving and worſhiping the one only True God, and His Son, whom we have generally received, and this Worſhip or Service in the nature of it being intrinſically good, and the External order (ſuch as that of time and place, and the like Circumſtances) being properly under his Jurisdiction, it hath ſeemed to us hitherto, that unleſs there was ſomething in that order and way preſcribed, which is ſinful, and that required too as a condition of that Communion, there is no man could refuſe his attendance

dance on these Parochial Assemblies, without the sin of disobedience: And consequently his separation thereby becoming sinful, proves Schism: But if the Scene be alter'd, and those separate Assemblies made legal; the Schism in reference to the national upon the same account does vanish. Schism is a separation from that Church, whereof we *ought*, or are *bound* to be Members: If the Supream Authority then loose our obligation to the Parish Meeting, so that we are bound no longer, the *iniquity*, (we say upon this account) *is not to be found*, and the Schism gone. Loe here, a way opened for the Parliament (if they please) to rid the trouble and scruple of Schism (at once) out of the Land. If they please not, yet is there something to be thought on for the Separatist in a way of *forbearance*; that the innocent Christian, at least, as it was in the time of *Trajan*, may not be *sought out unto punishment*. Especially when such a Tolleration only

is

is desired, as is consistant with the *Articles of Faith*, a *good life*, and *the Government of the Nation.*

But what shall we say then to the Papists, which is the Objection hit still in their Teeth that plead for moderation? Why, we will not baulk the delivery of our opinion. There are Two parts we profess of that favour or condescension we seek from the Higher Powers: The one consisting of a *Composition* with those whose Principles are fit and capable of it: And the other consisting of *forbearance* towards those whose Principles will allow them no more. The Papist in our account is but one sort of Recusants, and the conscientions and peaceable among them must be held in the same Predicament with those among our selves, that likewise refuse to come to Common Prayer. It is true, we have Laws very severe against the Jesuite, and Seminary Priest: But this we suppose to be upon the ground of State Interest. The Supremacy of the Pope,

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and the Authority of the King are inconsistent in this Land: The Priest and Jesuite are taken by Law as Factors for the Pope; and an undermining the Government in all States is a Capital Crime. But as for the common Papist, who lives innocently in his way, he is to us as other Separatists, and so comes under the like Tolleration. That is, he is not to expect to have power or trust, being not of the Religion of the State; but he may hope for the enjoyment of his Conscience *as we*, without wrong or oppression. And indeed if it be only Liberty of Conscience that he seeks, this will be sufficient, that he is not troubled, *nor we*. If he desires more, he stirs us all presently into Jealousie, and no wonder if we be very sollicitous to have Popery kept out of *Dominion*, or our selves from Fire and Faggot, how gentle and equal soever we be to it, and to all parties alike under a safe *Subjugation*. For as the Roman Catholick we suppose will consider

that

that to go to bring in a Religion upon a people that are no more prepared for theirs then we are in this Nation, were the committing of a Rape upon the publick Conſcience, and poſſeſſion being got without our good wills would not likly be long retained: So are we to remember the common rule of Chriſtianity towards them, and to all Men, that we muſt do as we would be done by, and that, *with what meaſure we mete to others, it ſhall be met to us again.*

And now we turn us to the Houſes. My Lords and Gentlemen! We ſuppoſe you honeſt Perſons that would not depart from this Catholick Rule, that would not wrong any, and if you did, would make them recompence. There have been very hard Acts paſſed, which when the Bills were brought in, might haply look ſmooth, and fair to you: But you ſaw not the Covert Art, ſecret Machination, and purpoſely contrived Snares againſt one

whole Party. If ſuch a form of words would not, another ſhould do their buſineſs: By this means, you in the firſt place your ſelves, ſome of you were overſtript: Multitudes diſpoſſeſs'd of their Livings: The Vineyard let out to others: The Lord Jeſus the Maſter of it deprived of many of His Faithful Labourers: And the Poor Sheep (what had they done?) bereft of their accuſtomed Spiritual Food, to the hazard of their Eternal Souls. Among many Arguments therefore for Liberty in other Papers, from *Policy*, *Convenience*, *Reaſon of State*, and *Reaſon of Religion*, we have this one to offer you of a more binding Nature, an Argument from *Juſtice*, *Righteouſneſs*, and *Reſtitution* to the wronged. It is true, that the Places they once had, are filled and diſpoſed of: But there are others enough. There are many of thoſe who poſſeſs *theirs*, do alſo keep their *own*, and keep more. There are many who are *Canons*, *Deans*, *Prebendaries*, that are alſo *Parſons*,

Parſons, *Rectors*, *Vicars*: Who have Benefices and Honours by Heaps, and by the Buſhel. If it ſhall pleaſe you therefore in this *Bill* on the Anvil, or in another to take Cognizance of *Pluraliſts*, that for the preventing an idle, ſcandalous, covetouſly overgrown, unprofitable Miniſtry, every Man who hath more than one *cure of Souls*, or one dignity, ſhall give them up into a Publick ſtock, or to a general diſtribution, you ſhall do the Church right, and the Ejected right, you ſhall give ſuch Drones their due, and God His due, and ſtrew the way by this means, for making your Grace intended in this Bill, of ſignification. In the Name of God Sirs, let us move you to this; if it were only *hac vice*, for a preſent needful conjunction of us at this ſeaſon. We ſee the Jaws of the Jeſuite, and the Sectary opening upon us; If the ſober Proteſtant Intereſt be not united, we periſh. We know who will be ready to ſtamp here, and throw duſt in the Air; for it is theſe

Sons of the Horſleech, whoſe Voice is *give*, *give*, that will never be contented with a *ſingle Portion*. A *Dignity* therefore with a *Living*, let them be allowed: But one *Dignity*, and one *cure of Souls*. it is therefore this hard Objection at the bottom, the Prieſts covetouſneſs, and corruption, rather than their diſpute about this indifferent, that really hinders the Churches Peace and Proſperity.

We ſhall therefore for the gentle enforcement of this, humbly offer you ſome Reaſons.

It is manifeſt, that Pluraliſts were allowed in the Church at firſt upon the account only of neceſſity; becauſe they had not Miniſters enough that could Preach to the People. They could get ſome to *Read*, but none to give them a *Sermon*: And upon this account, they admitted one to be Paſtor to ſeveral Congregations. But now the Land does abound with ſo many Miniſters, who have *never a cure*, and

ſuch

ſuch as are no leſs learned, and more painful in Preaching, than thoſe that have *three or four.* We will plead with theſe Men before Heaven, and before you who are the Heads of our Tribes aſſembled, that it is not pious, not fit, not political, (that is not for the common good) that this Cuſtom ſhould continue, when the Reaſon is ceaſed; eſpecially when ſo many of thoſe that are put out have Families, and ſcarce Bread to ſubſiſt.

It is a ſaying ſince the times of *Conſtantine*, That when the Church had but *Wooden Chalices*, it had *Golden Prieſts*; but when they had *Golden Chalices*, and rich Benefices, they had *Wooden Miniſters.* That Religion brought forth Riches, and the Daughter hath devoured the Mother. It is pity that Men who are called to this Function, which requires them to be Examples to others of humility, lowlineſs of mind, ſelf-denal, and mortification, ſhould be lead ſo much as they are into the temptation

tation idleneſs, and exceſs by their preferments. For as it hath been reflected upon by ſome of the Houſe; and other Gentlemen who ſerved the King without repairs, as an errour of the State in the late Reſtauration of Epiſcopacy, that the profits of the Church-Lands for twenty years together ſhould be beſtowed at once on a few ſingle perſons, which would have leiſurely requited a great many: So are they really as little pleaſed to have the Prieſt, who was perhaps a while ago, their Servitor at the Univerſity, or Tenants Son, or ſomething meaner than they will ſay, ſhould by the ſudden accumulation of ſo many places as he hath had Simonically or Gratuitouſly conferred upon him, be huffed up to that pompous height and vanity, of his Coach and Liveries, as makes him to become the very envy of of his Patron, and ſcandal to his profeſſion.

It is true, that the Nobility Spiritual and Temporal have the Prerogative to capaci-

capacitate a Miniſter according to Law for divers Livings: But when Jeſus Chriſt the great Maſter of the Vineyard does command their labour, and that they *feed the Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made them Overſeers*, there is no ſuch priviledge to be urged, but in the nature of the thing it is void. There there is no Cuſtom, no Right, no Law, if the King, Lords, and Commons, if the whole World ſhould agree to make it, that can be of force againſt the Goſpel. *Nulla datur poteſtas ad malum.*

There are few of you who are Proteſtants in either Houſes without jealouſie, that the *Romaniſts* were borrowing an *Helve* for their *Hatchet* out of the *Wood* of the Fanaticks; and that if they came to obtain their purpoſe: It is not hard to conjecture, which *Trees* were like to go down, one after another. As thoſe Men of the Church therefore are ſo willing you ſhould do ſomething for the ſecurity of your Religion and them,

it

it is meet that they ſhould be ready to contribute to it. That they who preach the Goſpel to others, ſhould be perſwaded to put the great duty of it, which is *ſelf-abrenuntiation* into practiſe themſelves. For that Man is not fit to be a Miniſter of Chriſt, or admitted into His Vineyard at all, that does not look more to his *Word*, than to his *Penny*, and ſeeks not the wellfare of *Jeruſalem* above his advancement; and had not rather convert *one Soul*, than get *two Livings*, and have a *Prebend* to ſpare. According to what every Mans mind is moſt upon in his Sphear (the *publick* Intereſt, or his *own*) ſuch is his value more or leſs.

However this be, whether they are willing or not, there is an univerſal *eminens dominium* in the Supream legiſlative Authority that puts an end to all Cavil (if there ariſe any) *de jure privatorum*: And we will conclude with this, that whatſoever things, are therefore ſubſtantially profitable for the

the Community, and are retarded only by the intereſt of private perſons, theſe are things moſt truly worthy the Conſultation of Parliament. God Almighty keep alive the true *Engliſh*, publick Spirit. God preſerve the Proteſtant Religion, and the perſon of the King. God proſper an Accommodation.

We of the Kings Party (ſays Judge *Jenkins*) *did, and do deteſt all Grievances of the People, as much as any Men living.* In his *Lex Terræ.*

It is a certain Truth, This Kingdom without an Act of Oblivion, and a meet regard had to tender Conſciences, will unavoidably be ruined. In the Armies Indempnity.

I ſay again, That without a Gracious general Pardon from His Majeſty, and a favourable regard had to tender Conſciences, there will be neither Truth nor Peace in the Land, nor

any Man ſecure of any thing that he hath. In his Cordial for the good People of *London.*

And again in His Declaration for Tryals of Treaſons, and all Capital Crimes to be by a Jury, *They that love this Common-wealth, will uſe all means to procure an Act of Oblivion, and tender Conſciences a juſt and reaſonable ſatisfaction, elſe we muſt all periſh firſt or laſt.*

Θεῶ δόξα.

FINIS.